

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT  
PCT/BE99/00084, FILED JULY 2, 1999

cont.  
a<sup>2</sup>  
10. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the sintering (7) of the fuel pellets in an atmosphere of argon and hydrogen is carried out at a temperature between 1600 and 1760°C, the argon possibly being replaced with nitrogen.

11. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that, during the sintering (7), the oxygen partial pressure is adjusted, preferably by adjusting the H<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O ratio in a flushing gas, in order to improve the interdiffusion of the PuO<sub>2</sub> and UO<sub>2</sub> oxides.

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